
ARENA REPORT

Volume 1, Number 15

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE
Saturday, April 8, 1989
New Haven Coliseum
New Haven, CT

Welcome to an actual NWA "Arena Report" where they wrestle. Yes folks, the Turner crew finally has hit the Northeast once again and this time, not for a one shot deal as they'll return in late June. More on that later.

The move to Florida is set for June 1, which is sooner than initially anticipated. We'll have three more issues before that date with publishing scheduled for 4/28- Providence, 5/12- Springfield, and 5/19- New Haven, all WWF shows. The line-ups for these shows can be found in the "Ramblings" section. As I stated earlier, I will continue this sheet in Florida at the same intervals of twice per month. It should be more diversified with Vince, Turner, and Dusty's group running down in the Sunshine State. I don't want to waste too much time as we have tons to cover including a Wrestlemania V and Clash of Champions review. I've postponed the Mexico wrestling piece from Evan Ginzburg until issues 17 and 18 as it'll be a two parter.

"Arena Report" is published twice per month at 50¢ an issue. The number at the top left hand corner of this page will tell you how many issues you have remaining. All letters, match reports, and renewals can be sent to Ron Lemieux, 205 Vernon Ave. #187, Vernon, CT 06066.

I had a few inquiries to my marital status (sorry Missy, I'm not available, your stuck with Eddie) as in last issue I mentioned that I attended the show with my two future brother in laws. A couple of people said they thought I was already married. Well I am, but those two guys are my wife's sisters boyfriends whom I'm assuming will get married. Frankly, you probably don't give a shit and I don't blame you.

We had a mini get together for tonights show as Dan Reilly, his son Christopher, Louie Fortuna from Stoughton MA, Scott "Fred Sparta" Dickinson from Salem, Ted Field Jr. from New Hampshire, and Paul Jackiewicz from Revere, MA met me at my place. We drove down to the "Ground Round" in New Haven where we met Gary Fishman and Evan Ginzburg of Queens, NY. We met up with John McAdam and his lady at the show. (Sorry GAG readers, I didn't get a good look to rate her.) Okay, the stage is set, let's go to Jeff Sieg.. I mean Gary Michael Cappetta for the introductions.

Opening Match

Junkyard Dog beat Rip Morgan with a small package in 6:33. I checked my program to make sure it said NWA on it. The "Ripper" tried but look at his foe. We had seats right over where the dressing room was and we cascaded chants of "Junkfood" on the dog. So did a few other fans below us but we never found out if they were "Observer" readers or not.

2nd Match

Bob Orton and Dick Murdoch went to a twenty minute draw. They had a better match at the Clash card. They dragged this out pretty bad. No excuse for these two. *

N.W.A. TV Title

Sting beat Kevin Sullivan in 5:50. Stinger got the second biggest pop of the night. He started the bout off with four hot moves in a row concluding with a dive over the ropes onto "Coach" (or couch) Kevin. Mike Rotunda came out at the three minute mark. As Sting applied the scorpion on Sullivan, Mike got on the ring apron. Sting released the hold and Rotunda got down. As Sullivan lifted Sting for a slam, he went over the back and pushed the "Gamesmaster" into the ropes for a roll-up. ** $\frac{1}{2}$

U.S. Tag Team Title

IRON SHEIK & BUTCH REED BEAT EDDIE GILBERT & RICK STEINER TO WIN TAG TITLES: I want you to notice this. Teddy Long was the ref and he turned heel again. Gilbert had Sheik pinned but Reed came in with the flag and nailed Eddie right in front of Long who still made the count. He then gave the belts to the heels who left the ring. Tommy Young came down and got into an argument on the mic. Young did bad but Long was decent. Young said as far as he was concerned, the faces still were the champs, BUT THEY NEVER REVERSED THE DECISION. There were no cameras but sources say the NWA wants to show New Haven that belts can change hands anywhere, not just in front of the cameras. But if so, why Sheik and Reed? As Evan dubbed them, "The Iran and I Can Barely Walk Connection". Time was 12:16 and the whole thing was done pretty well. They just better not screw these fans over already and not acknowledge that any of this happened. ** $\frac{1}{2}$

U.S. Heavyweight Title

Lex Luger retained his title by pinning Michael Hayes with Hiro Matsuseless. Luger won it with a backslide. Match was not that hot and my grade of * $\frac{1}{2}$ may be too high but what do you expect from a veteran Bravo-Duggan watcher. Time was a long 20:10.

N.W.A. World Tag Team Title

Road Warriors defeated Dr. Death Steve Williams & Mike Rotunda by DQ. This was a very tight match with solid clotheslines and punches. I was watching for a shoot between Doc and Animal or Hawk but none of them brought a gun. The Varsity Club was DQ'd for Sullivan using a chair. Time was 12:51. *** Roadies got biggest pop of the night.

N.W.A. World Heavyweight Championship

Ricky Steamboat retained his title by pinning Ric Flair in 34:07 of a hot match. Please turn Flair babyface just to save Steamer from embarrassment. The crowd was about 65% Flair. But the boos were terrible. What does Ric need to do, beat up Bonnie or even "The Dragon's" kid? I know why they canned Vincent Young (actually, he quit) they wanted to use his music for Steamboat which they did here. Climax saw Flair whip Steamboat into the corner and the "Nature Boy" went for a backdrop. Ricky cradled him for the 1,2,3. You really do need to see those chops live to appreciate them. Unreal. **** $\frac{1}{2}$

New Haven Notes

The NWA contingent should be pleased as punch as they drew 4,200

which is great considering they blundered the promoting of this event so bad, I thought they'd cancel. Many observers felt they'd be lucky to draw 1,000. They had a bad card scheduled with Flair-Luger, Roadies-Sullivan & Spivey, Steiner-Rotunda, Sting-Reed announced up until the morning of the show when Joe Pedicino said due to unusual circumstances, tonight's card has been changed. We thought, too little, too late. But we were pleasantly surprised. Considering they didn't promote in NY on WPIX and only did so on one CT station and not the other, the crowd was phenomenal... They announced a return date 6/23. Vince has a date 5/19 so maybe the Coliseum will switch every month. Of course, I won't be here for that card and with my luck they'll stop running Florida.

Ramblings

Of course, the big news, which is old news is that George Scott was fired as booker for the NWA. I was telling everyone that would listen (usually just my two little nephews) that Scott was receiving two pay checks. I guess someone finally opened his mail and saw a check signed by Linda McMahon... The new bookers will be a committee of Eddie Gilbert, Ric Flair, Jim Ross, and Kevin Sullivan. Should be a step in the right direction... Flair will be doing jobs all month to show everyone that if he can do a job, so can they. But they're not winning a World Title in another month are they?... Steve Williams and Animal almost got into it at the tapings in Daytona Beach. It seems that Animal was accusing Doc of not selling enough. Pot calling the kettle black or what. Oh, oh, I'm in line for the all cliche of the week in Matwatch for that one ... Some tidbits on Titan tapings held last week. Dino Bravo is now managed by Jimmy Hart since Frenchy is history. Why didn't Bravo go with him?... Hart is also now managing Mega Man who is Tom Magee... Ronnie Garvin wrestled Greg Valentine in a loser must retire match. Ron lost and now he's a referee... Brother Love will be having live segments at arenas with Zeuss who is in Hogan's new movie. Apparently they are going to train this guy who's never been a wrestler and have him face Hogan in the main event at Summerslam II... They did a skit where Beefcake and Sherri were with Brother Love and Savage came out in some sort of altercation that sets up Savage-Beefcake uugh. It was obvious that Sherri will now be Savage's manager. Liz will manage the "Pukester"... World Class is going to try to keep Freddy Fargo and his contingent out of the free tapings as they boo Eric Embry unmercifully. Quite a shame considering Freddy is the most loyal fan they have. ... One of George Scott's last booking efforts in Miami drew 500 for Luger-Sheik on top, or on rock bottom, however you want to put it... Recent banter on Prime Time Wrestling: Monsoon: "The Bushwhackers were in the army. You can tell the way they march around." Heenan: "Yeah, the New Zealand Army. They won so many great battles." ... Line ups for upcoming reports: The Providence card is on page 8. 5/12 Springfield-Studd-Andre, Rockers-Rougeaus, Rooster-Brawler, Haku-Duggan, Warlord-Koko. B A DD 5/19 New Haven- Rude-Warrior, Towers-Demo, Rooster-Brawler, Santana-Martel, Barbarian-Neidhart... Thought the Tanaka & Diamond match with Patera-Rhengans was decent. If Tanaka would only grow a few inches, he'd be a superstar... For anyone interested in buying, selling, or trading videos, write to Bill and Debbie Moffitt, 6065 Layton St. Alta Loma, CA 91701. Tell them "A.R." sent you. While I have time, a few newsletters I'd like to mention: Wrestling Observer, Dave Meltzer, P.O. Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009. Truly the guru of newsletters. Send Dave \$5 per four issue set... Pro Wrestling Torch, Wade Keller, P.O. Box 201844, Minneapolis, MN 55420. A picture accompanies each fine issue. Price- \$1.25 an issue. I'll get the rest of you guys next time.

SUPER SUNDAY REVIEW

Wrestlemania V

1) Hercules pinned King Haku after a belly to back suplex. They declared Herc the winner but I didn't see his arm raise off the mat. Pretty good opener. * $\frac{1}{2}$ Howard Finkel made a rare error here as he announced the future convict as "King Tonga". 2) The Twin Towers beat The Rockers in a match that was better than I expected. Rockers did some nice moves. End saw Bubba catch Michaels in mid air and smash him to the canvas. Akeem followed that up with a 747 and pin. Next stop for the Towers, the tag titles. ** 3) This is where the card started to go downhill until the 10th match. Ted DiBiase and Brutus Beefcake went to a double count out. Ted sold great but I just couldn't like this match. ~~74~~ * 4) The Bushwhackers beat The Flabulous Rougeaus when Butch pinned Ray after the double knee to the stomach. Dreadful. -** 5) Curt Hennig pinned Blue Blazer with the fisherman suplex. I was excited about this bout as Jesse was saying how good it should be which made me think they'd let them go all out. Other than a few nice spots though, nothing special. * $\frac{1}{2}$ 6) Demolition beat Powers of Pain & Mr. Fuji to retain the belts to thankfully end this feud. Demo clotheslined Fuji. $\frac{1}{2}$ * 7) Dino Bravo pinned Ron Garvin with a side suplex. $\frac{1}{2}$ * only for the punch Ron nailed Frenchy with after the match. Martin must have kissed and told. 8) The Brain Busters beat Tito Santana & a now heel Rick Martel afetr Tully and Arn gave the lonely Chico a stuff piledriver. It wasn't a good turn at all as Martel was hit by a bad Tito forearm and sold it for five minutes when it barely grazed him. Martel just leaving ringside smelled too much like Savage's turn. The audience probably thought Tito went back to the dressing room and they fought over Sherri Martel. * $\frac{1}{4}$ It was now time for intermission.. or it should have been. I'd love to know how much they paid Piper and Downey for this because whatever it was, it wasn't worth it. Other than Bro Loves' opening skit playing Piper, the whole thing almost put us all to sleep. 9) Jake Roberts beat Andre the Giant due to Ted DiBiasa's interference when he stole Damien. Ted and Jake could be a decent feud. They really did a bad job if they want to headline Andre-Studd this summer. Not that it would draw anyway. Dud 10) Hart Foundation upended Greg Valentine & Honkeytonk Man when Bret hit Honkey with the megaphone. I enjoyed this match and it was about time someone decided to work again this night. ** $\frac{1}{2}$ 11) Rick Rude won the Inter-Continental title beating Ultimate Warrior when Dingo went for a suplex and Heenan tripped him enabling Rude to fall on top for the pin. Shoot me if I'm losing it but they worked hard here and it was the best match so far. *** 12) Time to go back to sleep as Hacksaw Jim Dummy and Bad News Brown went to a double dq. -* 13) Terry Rooster beat Bobby Heenan in quick fashion. There was speculation that the Brain wouldn't work this match as he was hit by Ultimate earlier. Obviously, he'll use that for an excuse as to why he lost. After the bout, Lombardi leveled Taylor with a clothesline. Dud 14) Hulk Hogan won the WWF Title by pinning Randy Savage. The bout started out real slow but picked up and would have been a Four star match. But the ending sucked so bad that I gave it ***. Hogan gets the snot beat out of him, comes back, gives Randy a boot to the face, a legdrop, and pins him. I have nothing against Hogan winning the belt back (well, I really do) but at least beat Savage up first to make Randy look tough. Hogan was bleeding which made us think of NWA Baltimore. But they just got rid of the Jersey commision so they had to go to a different ending. HA HA.

Wrestlemania V Notes

Someone tell these guys to hold the show somewhere else next year. The crowd seemed even worse than last year. Put wrestling fans in the building, not high rollers... Whoever made the decision to have Rockin Robin sing should be locked in a room with her while she does "One Hundred Bottles of Beer On The Wall". Don't worry Jake, if it's Pat Patterson, you have nothing to fear... Jimmy Snuka was announced which I liked. Don't think because he got no response, it means he won't get over. God wouldn't have gotten over in that place... Ted Bruttomesso, Chris Shinn, Dan Reilly and his clan joined me at my place again this year. Dan's son Kevin would make a good tornado tag match partner. Boy is he tough, Do you think Sean Mooney was nervous interviewing Donald Trump? He must have stumbled over four words in a 2 minute interview.

Clash of the Champions

1) Samoan Swat Team defeated Midnight Express. My two favetag teams. Match was good stuff. Bobby Eaton was launched by Stan onto Samu but Fatu used the phone on Bobby's head to set up the pin. Stan Lane's karate kicks do nothing for me. *** $\frac{1}{2}$ 2) Keiji Muto beat Steve Casey with the moonsault press. This was mainly a show off match for Muto. I've never seen anyone go so high for a dive out of the ring. ** for match, **** for Muto. 3) Junkyard Dog pinned Butch Reed after JYD threw Reed into Matsuseless. I couldn't hate this match. There was some decent brawling in it. * $\frac{1}{4}$ 4) Bob Orton beat Dick Murdoch when Gary Hart tripped up Dick when he had Bob in the air for a brainbuster. Ending looked bad as they were pretty far from the ropes and Hart had to crawl in the ring to grab the foot. I really enjoyed the bout though. First 5 minutes were scientific and then Orton started the brawling. Good to see Orton back in the U.S. and not with Vince. ** $\frac{1}{2}$ 5) Mike Rotunda & Steve Williams won the World Tag belts by beating the Road Warriors when Teddy Long turned heel ref. He wouldn't count after the Roadies top rope clothesline. As Hawk was arguing with Long, Dr. Death rolled him up for the title winning pin. A very quick pin too. Long will become a manager and guide Reed and Ron Simmons. Will probably be the NWA version of Slick. They need to put Paul Ellering to pasture. Send him with Matsuda to graze. *** 6) Ranger Ross beat Iron Sheik via dq. as Rip Morgan interfered after Ross gave Sheik a super kick. The only horrible bout on the card but thankfully it was short. JYD made the save. Dud 7) Eddie Gilbert & Rick Steiner beat Danny Spivey & Kevin Sullivan to retain the U.S. tag belts. After Rick hit Spivey with an awesome clothesline to knock both out of the ring, Gilbert hit Kevin in the stomach with Missy's purse and then cradled him. ** $\frac{1}{4}$ 8) Ricky Steamboat retained the NWA World Title beating Ric Flair in two out of three falls. Flair reversed a cradle to take the first fall. Steamboat then made Flair submit to a double chicken wing. In the third fall with the chicken wing on again, Steamer fell back and both men's shoulders were on the mat but Tommy Young declared Ricky the winner even though Flair's foot was on the bottom rope. This will lead to their rematch on May 7. What can I say. This match was super. The first two falls were good, but the last fall blew me away. Thus, I have to give it *****. I liked it better than Chicago. Steamboat's son dressed as a dragon was too much though.

Clash Notes

They did a real nice opening to set the stage which reminded me of the NBA openings on C.B.S. Showing the former champs arriving made me feel like it was a pay per view and not TBS... They should have

had a title under Jim Herd's name though as besides us, who knew who he was... Michael Hayes was great but his comment about his record attendance mark in the Superdome being broken was ridiculous... How in the world did that Wrestlemania phone update ad get on TBS. It must have been one of the last tasks Scott booked before getting fired.

A Comparison

There is none. Wrestling wise, Turner blew Vince out of the water and with George Scott gone I can see that happening quite often. TBS also did a great job on the production side. Great lighting, good entrances, etc. I watched the tape of Clash on Wed. afternoon and when I turned my VCR off there was NESN rebroadcasting the last Boston Garden card with Hercules wrestling Bad News Brown. Need I say more. Now that the Vince crony is history, LET THE WAR BEGIN!!!!!! By the way, there was more heat in that crowd of 4,500 in New Orleans than the 17,000 plus in Atlantic City. Money wise the WWF did awesome but for excitement. Snoooore.

Correspondent Reports

Wheeling Civic Center Wheeling, WV March 16, 1989
Correspondent: John Lanigan

1) Tim Horner pinned Mike Sharpe in 13:36. Grade-D 2) Haku and Rick Martel went to a 19:11 draw. Rick had the boston crab on #4567 when the bell rang. Grade-C 3) Terry Taylor beat Brooklyn Lombardi with a backslide in 10:43. Grade-B- 4) Demolition defeated the Powers of Pain in 9:27. Ax used Fuji's cane to nail Barbarian to set up the pin. Grade-C+ 5) Brutus Buttplug beat Rick Rude with a roll up in 11:08. Grade-D 6) Hillbilly Jim used a smelly boot to the face to put away Boris Zhukov in 7:10. Grade-D- 7) Randy Savage beat Ultimate Warrior by count out when Rude came out to distract the human blow up doll. Time was 8:10. Grade-C- Attendance- 4,500

Madison Square Garden New York, N.Y. March 18, 1989
Correspondent: Elyse Zois

1) Young Stallions beat The Conquistadors. 2) Rockin Robin beat Judy Martin. 3) Curt Hennig pinned "Ruined" Ronnie Garvin. 4) Hulk Hogan beat Big Bossman in a steel cage. 5) The Rockers beat The Brain Busters on a disqualification. 6) Red Rooster beat Brawler with a backslide. 7) Bad News Brown and Hercules went to a DCOR. 8) Dino Bravo and The Rougeaus were beaten by Hacksaw Duggan & The Bushwhackers

Memorial Hall Kansas City, MO March 24, 1989
Correspondent: Bruce Grummert

This was a tournament for the Central States Title and a card Bruce hated to put mildly. 1) T.C. Carter beat Russell Sapp in 9:14 with a neckbreaker. 2) Mike Enos beat Steve Ray by DQ when he used Enos's hammer after receiving a low blow. (Air Mail) 3) Ricky Rice beat Paul Diamond with a cradle in 9:54. Very disappointing match for these two. 4) Ric McCord beat Tommy Sharpe with a nice flying body press off the top rope in 12:31. 5) Akio Sato beat Curtis Hughes using the ropes in 5:21. 2nd Round 1) Mike Enos hit Ricky Rice in the stomach with his sledge hammer to set up pin in 7:20. 2) Akio Sato cradled Ric McCord in 7:09 of a decent brawl. 3) T.C. Carter beat Mike Enos with a reverse neckbreaker in 6:26. Finals Akio Sato beat T.C. Carter

with Mike George as the guest ref to win the Central States Title. Carter bled buckets as George bladed him. Didn't T.C. know how? I wouldn't do it to myself, let alone have someone do it to me. Imagine giving Abdullah a blade and having him cut you open. Talk about hitting a gusher. Attendance-218

Dorton Arena

Raleigh, NC

March 23, 1989

Correspondent: Mike Gunter

1) Michael Hayes DDT'd Bob Bradley in 11:30. Grade-C- 2) Great Muta used the moonsault press on George South in 5 minutes. Grade-C+ 3) Iron Sheik camel clutched Steven Casey in 11 minutes. Grade-D- 4) Butch Reed and Eddie Gilbert went to a twenty minute draw. After the bout Reed asked for 5 more minutes and Eddie pinned him in 30 seconds. Grade-C 5) Road Warriors went to a double count out with Dan Spivey and Steve Williams. Good match with lots of power moves Grade-B- 6) Ricky Steamboat pinned Ric Flair in 23 minutes. Great match. Grade-A- Attendance-800 George Scott at sabotage work again as instead of this show being promoed on TV, they were plugging a show in Fayetteville 80 miles away.

Letters To The Editor

Feedback

When a sheet begs for constructive criticism, eventually it will be told to stop being so critical, opinionated, and so smart ass by a few responding readers.

What makes Arena Report so readable is the unique style you have developed which is very readable. More readable than some of the WWF cards are watchable. (Gee, thanks Harry!) Even if in the future, some reader responds, "You have been out in the Florida sun too long.", keep the same style. The cracking wise and sometimes cerebral humor gives you a niche of your own.

I do think though that a wrestler who is limited by his character should not be graded down as much as a good wrestler who just does not try at all.

On 18 minute twenty minute draws; I have no idea what the NWA does but I have been told at other cards that when the finishing hold is put on, than ring the bell signaling a draw. The WWF had a similar situation in Cape Girardeau, MO when ringside stop watchers started to infer the timekeeper was of Polish lineage.

Harry White
St. Louis, MO

Stupid Vinnie

Vince McMahon has done many stupid things in the past, but recently he has done many. First, in one of the most disgraceful things in wrestling history, he turned Steve Lombardi into a Heenan family member. Second, he has been having Tim Horner waisting his potential in preliminary matches that he loses on TV. Finally, he has Rick Rude the top contender to the Inter-Continental Title. How can a man who can't defeat Jake Roberts or Brutus Beefcake stand a chance against the Ultimate Warrior?

Matt Martin
Glendale, AZ

RL- As far as Steve Lombardi is concerned, Pat Patter... Oh, one knock against him an issue is enough. I guess Rude showed you. He's now the champion. Just shows you that on any given night.

Brother Joe

Just when I think I've had enough of the Rooster strut or the Bro Love scene- I get another "Arena Report" that rekindles my interest in the squared circle.

Joe Sirianni
Ballston Spa, NY

Final Word

Thanks to everyone for reading. It was a great time. Also, I'd like to thank John, Elyse, Harry, Matt, Mike, Bruce, and Joe for their correspondence. Keep it up everybody, it's well appreciated.

Next report will be 4/28 from Providence with this post Wrestlemania line-up: Savage vs. Beefcake in the main (ugh), DiBiase vs. Roberts, Bravo vs. Hercules, Bushwhackers vs. Tully & Arn (what a waste of the next three monthes), Roma vs. Zuchov, Koko vs. Warlord, and Robin vs. Judy Martin for the 4,987,098,976 time. What a line up huh? Next to this, Dusty's shows will look like classics. Can't wait to get "Funky like a monkey". (Whatever that entails.) Until April 28.

See ya,

Ron